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purely ideal fields; the end, a moment of perfection, of self-complete unity of experience, of favorable stimulation with repose.'

HENRY RUTGERS MARSHALL.

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THE TERMS 'CONSCIOUS' AND 'CONSCIOUSNESS'

IN an early number of this JOURNAL¹ I gave a brief account of the historical evolution of the significations of the term 'idea' in the English language. I wish now to consider the terms 'conscious' and 'consciousness'; not, however, so much with reference to their historical development as to the different types of meaning they represent and convey. I think this discrimination will be found not altogether irrelevant to current problems and discussions. I take my material again from Murray's Oxford Dictionary.

1. An early use emphasizes the 'con-' factor: a social fact. Consciousness means joint, or mutual, awareness. "To be a friend and to be conscious are terms equivalent" (South, 1664).² While this use is obsolete, it persists in poetic metaphor as attributed to things, *e. g.*, the 'conscious air,' etc. It also clearly influences the next sense, which is,

2. That of being 'conscious to one's self': having the witness to something within one's self. This is naturally said especially of one's own innocence, guilt, frailties, etc., that is of personal activities and traits, where the individual has peculiar or unique evidence not available to others. "Being so conscious unto myself of my great weakness" (Asher, 1620). Here is a distinctively personal adaptation of the social, or joint, use. The agent is, so to speak, reduplicated. In one capacity, he does certain things; in another, he is cognizant of these goings-on. A connecting link between 1 and 2 is found in a sense (obsolete like 1) where conscious means 'privy to,' a cognizant accomplice of,—usually, a guilty knowledge. It is worth considering whether 'self-consciousness,' in both the moral and the philosophic sense, does not involve this distinction and relation between the self doing and the self reflecting upon its past or future (anticipated) doings to see what sort of an agent is implicated; and whether, in short, many of the difficulties of self-consciousness as a 'subject-object' relation are not due to a failure to keep in mind that it establishes connection between a

¹ Vol. I., No. 7, p. 175.

² I owe to the Editor of the JOURNAL this interesting reference to Hobbes ('Leviathan,' ch. VII.): "When two, or more, men know of one and the same fact, they are said to be conscious of it one to another; which is as much as to know it together." Hobbes then uses this to explicate the moral meaning of conscience.

practical and a cognitional attitude, not between two cognitional terms.

3. 'Conscious' is also used to discriminate a certain kind of being or agent, one which knows what it is about, which has emotions, etc., *e. g.*, a *personal* being or agent, as distinct from a stone or a plant. 'Consciousness' is then used as short for such a being. It denotes all the knowledges, intentions, emotions, etc., which make up the differential being or activity of such a being or agent. This practical and empirical reference to a specific thing is seen clearly in sub-sense (a) where 'conscious' means intentional, purposive, and (b) where it means undue preoccupation with what concerns, invidiously, one's self (the bad sense of 'self-consciousness'). 'Consciousness' thus marks off in general the difference of persons from things, and in particular the characteristic differences between persons,—since each has his own emotions, informations, intentions, etc. No *technically* philosophical sense is involved.

4. 'Conscious' means *aware*: 'consciousness,' the state of being aware. This is a wide, colorless use; there is no discrimination nor implication as to contents, as to what there is awareness of,—whether mental or physical, personal or impersonal, etc.

5. The distinctively philosophical use (that defined as such in the dictionary) appears to be a peculiar combination of 2, 3 and 4. It is, in the words of the dictionary, "the state or faculty of being conscious, as a *condition and concomitant* of all thought, feeling and volition." The words I have italicized bring out the difference between thoughts, etc., characterizing the peculiar quality of a specific being or agent, and something which in general lies back of and conditions all such thoughts. Consciousness is now one with mind, or soul, or subject, as an underlying condition hypostasized into a substance. This identification of 'mind' and 'consciousness' leads to Locke's familiar doctrine (1690), "Consciousness is the perception of what passes in one's own mind." Awareness is borrowed from sense 4, but is limited to what is 'in the mind' only. Meanwhile the 'private witness' sense of 3 more or less intentionally colors the resultant meaning. Consciousness is distinctly 'one's own' perception of 'one's own' mind. As a net result, we get a private type of existence (as distinct from private cognizance); of which *alone* one is directly or immediately aware (as distinct from the anything and everything of 4), while, moreover, enough is retained of the concreteness, the *thingness*, of 3 to make this a *special* stuff or entity, although the specific and practical character of the personal agent is eliminated, a 'condition' back of particular purposes, emotions, etc., being substituted.

6. Then we have a comparatively modern adaptation of 3, illustrated in a quotation from Dickens (1837): "When the fever left him and consciousness returned, he found," etc. The formal definition given is, "The state of being conscious regarded as the *normal condition of a healthy, waking life.*" (Italics naturally mine.) The corresponding term 'conscious' is defined as "having one's mental faculties actually in an active and waking state." (It is interesting to note that here, too, the earliest quotation dates no further back than 1841.)

I hardly think that any one who is aware of the ambiguous senses in which the term consciousness is habitually used in philosophical discussions and of the misunderstandings that result, possibly of one's self and certainly of others, will regard the foregoing as a merely linguistic contribution. It is no part of my present intention to note the implied philosophical bearings, save to suggest that meaning 5 begs as many metaphysical problems as is likely ever to be the privilege of any one word; that considerations based exclusively on 4 are not likely to be conclusive against positions that have 3 especially in mind, and *vice versa*; and that 6 seems to give the sense which underlies the psychological use of the term and to give (either by itself or in connection with 3) a standpoint from which the psychological sense can be kept free from the logical implications of the 'awareness' problem in general, and from the metaphysics of 5. To take the term 'by itself' is perhaps more appropriate for 'structural' psychology, while to take it in connection with a person or agent (sense 3) is appropriate for 'functional' psychology. But in the latter case, it should be understood that 'consciousness' means not a stuff, nor an entity by itself, but is short for *conscious* animal or agent,—for something *which* is conscious.

In making these suggestions I do not mean to indicate a belief that the different senses have no common qualities or appropriate cross-references. On the contrary, I believe that the connection of the logical meaning of 'awareness' with the facts involved empirically and practically in the existence of a certain sort of agent (especially as the latter itself becomes the subject-matter of natural science) determines one of the most real problems of present philosophy. But in discussing these problems nothing but good could come from stating explicitly the *prima facie* or immediate denotation of the terms used.

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